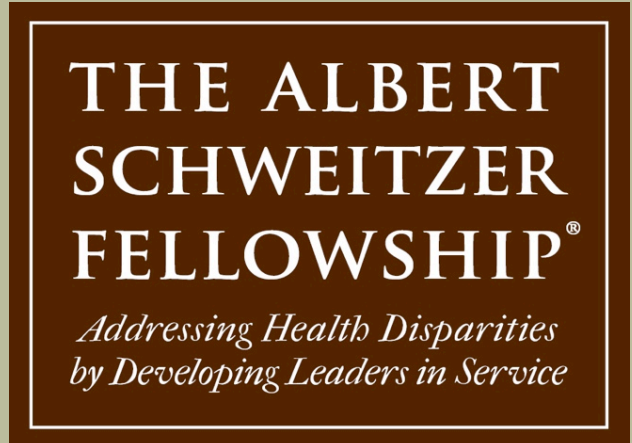


# THE COLUMBUS-ATHENS SCHWEITZER FELLOWS PROGRAM

Purpose: To facilitate service projects to benefit the Columbus and Athens communities, and simultaneously develop emerging professionals who have the skills to address unmet health-related needs throughout their careers.



## Reach Out and Read

Literacy Prescription for a Lifetime

### Introduction

By age 3, children from lower income families have 3 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.

These early literacy deficits are fiercely detrimental to health and wellness, especially in Appalachia. In Athens County 31% of children live below the poverty level and 9% of adults lack functional prose literacy skills.



*Preparing America's youngest patients for success in school and lifelong wellness.*

### Method

- Prescribe new, age-appropriate books to all children at well-child visits
- Nurses and physicians emphasize the importance of reading at home
- OUHCOM medical students engage patients in the waiting room
- Volunteer readers demonstrate read-aloud behavior to parents
- Create a literacy-rich waiting room
- Promote wellness-based pediatrics

### Impact

- Prescribed over **2,200 new books** to pediatric patients
- Engaged parents in proactive family healthcare
- Supported over 150 hours of volunteer reading by medical students
- Created donation and grant partnerships with community organizations

### Future

- Renewable sponsorship from OhioHealth O'Bleness Hospital and OU-HCOM Area Health Education Center
- Investment from providers at University Medical Associates
- TOUCH Volunteers from OU-HCOM



### Partners

Reach Out and Read at University Medical Associates Pediatrics serves the children and families of Athens and surrounding counties.

Books sponsors:

- **OUHCOM Area Health Education Center**
- **OU Stevens Literacy Center**
- **OhioHealth O'Bleness Hospital**



**Anne Flower**  
Heritage College of  
Osteopathic Medicine



“Start early to instill in your students awareness that they are on this earth to help and serve others; that is as important to pass on to them as knowledge.”

—Albert Schweitzer, PhD, MD